

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS IMMEDIATE

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FOLLOWING TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO CAIRO FROM MADRID
SEPT 15:

QUOTE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MADRID 6409

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, SP

SUBJ: SEIZURE OF EGYPTIAN EMBASSY

REF: A. MADRID 6401 (NOTAL) B. FEAREY-OP CENTER-MCNEIL TELECON

1. THE STILL RATHER CONFUSED SITUATION REGARDING THE
TAKEOVER OF THE EGYPTIAN EMBASSY HAS CLARIFIED SOMEWHAT.
SPANISH SECURITY FORCES AND PRESS TALLIEY NOW AGREE
THAT THERE ARE FIVE PALESTINIAN TERRORISTS CLAIMING TO
BELONG TO THE "GROUP OF THE FALLEN ABDEL KADER AL-HOUSENI."
THEY HAVE CLAIMED TO PRESS THEY HAVE NO CONNECTION WITH
ANY OF THE KNOWN PALESTINIAN GROUPS.

2. THE SO-CALLED PALESTINIAN COMMANDOS RELEASED THE
SPANISH EMPLOYEES OF THE EMBASSY, BUT RETAIN AS HOSTAGES
EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR MAHMOUD ABDEL GHAFAR (RECENTLY
ARRIVED AND HAS NOT PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS), PLUS
THE EGYPTIAN CONSUL, MOHAMED EL SHAFEI MEKKY; AND THE
PRESS OFFICER, (NAME UNKNOWN).

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3. ANOTHER GROUP OF ARAB STUDENTS IN MADRID BRIEFLY OCCUPIED THE OFFICES OF THE ARAB LEAGUE, HOLDING TWO OFFICIALS, BUT THEN RELEASED THEM AND LEFT THE BUILDING VOLUNTARILY AFTER DISTRIBUTING LEAFLETS. THE ARAB STUDENTS CLAIMED THEY HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE TERRORIST ACTION AT THE EGYPTIAN EMBASSY. ON THE FACE OF IT, THIS IS HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT ON FRIDAY, SEPT 12, A GROUP OF ARAB STUDENTS DID DEMONSTRATE AT THE ARAB LEAGUE HEADQUARTERS AND THE STUDENTS DID DEPART VOLUNTARILY TODAY.

4. THE PALESTINIANS REPORTEDLY THREATENED TO BLOW UP THE EMBASSY BUILDING IF THE POLICE INTERVENED AND UNIFORMED POLICE HAVE BEEN REPLACED BY PLAINCLOTHESMEN IN FRONT OF THE EGYPTIAN EMBASSY. THE TERRORIST DEMAND, AS REPORTED IN THE PRESS, IS THAT THE PALESTINIAN TERRORISTS WOULD KILL THE HOSTAGES UNLESS THE EGYPTIAN DELEGATION WITHDREW FROM THE GENEVA PEACETALKS WITH ISRAEL BY MIDNIGHT SPANISH TIME (2200 GMT). AN EARLIER REPORT (REF) SUGGESTS THEY ALSO DEMANDED THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT PUBLICLY DENOUNCE THE SINAI AGREEMENTS.

5. AT 1:00 P.M. SPANISH TIME, THE AMBASSADORS OF KUWAIT, ALGERIA AND IRAQ REPORTEDLY ENTERED THE EGYPTIAN EMBASSY TO ATTEMPT TO NEGOTIATE THE RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES. THESE NEGOTIATIONS ARE APPARENTLY STILL GOING ON, BUT WE HAVE NO DETAILS FROM THE MFA.

6. AT OUR REQUEST THE SPANISH HAVE INCREASED SECURITY SURVEILLANCE AT THE US EMBASSY. IN RESPONSE TO PRESS INQUIRIES FROM THE UNITED STATES FOR EMBASSY COMMENT, WE ARE SAYING QTE WE HAVE NO COMMENT; THE MATTER IS IN THE HANDS OF THE SPANISH AUTHORITIES UNQTE EATON QNQUOTE SISCO

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Message Attributes

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